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The Way of Emunah

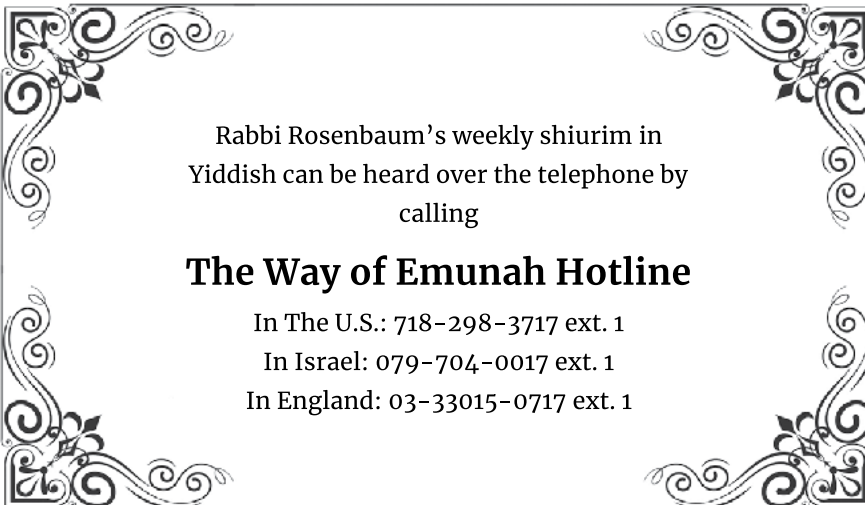
Collected Thoughts
on the Weekly Parshah

From

**Rabbi Meir Isamar
Rosenbaum shlita**

Emor

יחזיק יקר:
מצאת אותו בבורח"ד?
אתה יכול לקחת אותו בחנם!



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Parshas Emor - Lag B'Omer

Parshas Emor

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וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אֲמַר אֶל הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וְגו' (כא, א)

And Hashem said to Moshe: Say to the kohanim, the sons of Aharon, and say to them... (21:1)

Worrying About Orphans:

Rashi explains: “*’Emor v’amarta*’ (say and you shall say), (this double expression comes to admonish the adult Kohanim to be responsible for the youngsters.”

The Chasam Sofer *zt”l* explains Rashi by saying that if a kohen dies and leaves over young orphans, they are left with no source of livelihood. A kohen owns no land, and if the orphans are too young to go around collecting *terumah* or to do *avodah* in the Bais Hamikdosh to receive part of a *korban*, who is supposed to feed them?

Therefore, the Torah comes to admonish adult kohanim to take care of the orphaned children of other kohanim and

to ensure their needs are taken care of.

Do Not See Faults in Others:

The Lisker Rebbe *zy”a* (Sefer Ach Pri Tevuah) quotes Sefer Noam Magadim as explaining the words “you shall not become *tamei* to a *nefesh* in your nation” to mean that one should not find fault in any Jew.

The *pasuk* states (Bamidbor 12:3): “And the man Moshe was extremely humble, from any man on the face of the earth.” This means that **whenever Moshe saw any Jew commit a sin, he blamed himself because he knew that he was the “shoreh” of every Jewish soul.** Just like the branches of a tree

grow from its roots, so too all of Klal Yisroel grew from Moshe.

Similarly, the *pasuk* is saying to tell the kohanim that they shouldn't consider any *nefesh* in Yisroel "*tamei b'amav*", meaning that if anyone in *am Yisroel* seems impure, they shouldn't blame them. Rather, they should see it as "*l'she'eiro hakarov eilav*", to the relative close to him, meaning that they should blame themselves and say that it must be their fault that someone is acting that way.

The *pasuk* is explained similarly by Sefer Duda'im B'Sadeh (written by a student of Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk zy" a). He writes that **in order to properly serve Hashem, one must be exceedingly humble in his own eyes and never look down on others.** One must recognize that everyone Is expected to serve Hashem as well as he can according to his

level of understanding. It is possible that a simple Jew is doing his best and fulfilling his limited potential and, therefore, is more worthy than a *tzadik*, who may not be reaching his full potential of greatness. This is how Moshe was a bigger *anav* than any other man, as he always considered his avodah as being not as great as it could be, while he looked at others as fulfilling their full potential in *avodas Hashem*.

He thus explains that kohanim are commanded not to consider any Jew to be *tamei*, as they should see everyone as trying to do the best they can. He also uses this idea to explain Rashi's words "*l'hazhir gedolim al haketanim*", meaning that the *gedolim*, i.e., the *tzadikim*, are commanded to consider the "small people" to be *tzadikim*.

Bringing Down Influences of Simcha:

The Medrash Tanchuma explains this *pasuk* with a *moshol* of a butcher who used to frequent the king's palace. The king told him, "I decree that you may never see a dead body. Since you frequent my palace, and see my face, I do not want you to make my home impure." So too, Hashem decreed that since the kohanim frequent His house, the Bais Hamikdosh, that they should not come into contact with the dead.

The Izhbitzer Rebbe *zy"ta* (Sefer Mei Hashiloach) writes that the butcher's job was to provide food for the king and thereby make him happy. The king does not want any sadness to mix into his joy, so he decrees that the butcher should stay away from things that make him sad. So too, the kohanim's job is to bring influences of *simcha*

down to this world through their *avodah*, and, therefore, they cannot come into contact with the dead, as this will cause them to feel sadness.

Do Not Listen to the Yeitzer Hara:

Sefer Tiferes Shmuel (Ois 4) writes that although humility and lowliness are good *middos*, the *yeitzer hara* can use them to make a person depressed. It can convince him that his Torah and *tefillah* are worthless since he is unworthy, and this can cause a person to lose and become sad. To counter this, Chazal say (Sanhedrin 37A) that one should say that the world was created just for him. This means that one should recognize that his soul is pure and holy and his faults are merely external. When one accepts this fact, he will know that Hashem does desire his

Torah and *tefillah*, and he will not be fooled by the *yeitzer hara*.

In this vein, Rashi states (Shemos 27:20): “Crushed for lighting and not crushed for Menachos.” *Tzadikim* explain this to mean that one should be “crushed” – he should be humble and lowly – but only “for lighting”, meaning that this should be used as a means of lighting up oneself to serve Hashem properly. One should not be crushed “for Menachos”, meaning that his humility should not make him rest (*munach*) from serving Hashem. One should not have “*anavah pesulah*”, improper humility that impedes his *avodas Hashem*.

This is also seen from the Mishnah (Avos 2:13) that states: “Be careful with Kriyas Shema and *tefillah*... and don’t be a *rasha* in your own eyes.” This can be understood to mean that one should not despair and think

he can’t daven and say Kriyas Shema because the *yeitzer hara* tells him that he is unworthy. Rather, one should make sure to daven and serve Hashem and trust that He desires his *tefillos*, even though he is lowly. This is as Dovid Hamelech says (Tehillim 22:25): “For He does not shame and He does not abhor the humility of a poor man.... And when he calls to Him, He hears.” Even if one is “poor” in his *avodas Hashem*, He hears his prayers.

This is hinted to in the *pasuk*’s word “*l’nefesh*”. This refers to things pertaining to the soul, i.e., *avodas Hashem*. It says “*lo yitamu b’amav*”, meaning that **one should not allow the *yeitzer hara* to convince him that he is too impure and lowly to serve Hashem.** Rather, one should continue to serve Him and trust that He will accept his *avodah*, even though he is lowly.

Using The Power of Speech Only For Mitzvos:

The Medrash (Vayikroh Rabbah 26:1) states: “‘Say to the kohanim, the sons of Aharon, and say to them.’ This is as is stated (Tehillim 12:7): ‘The words of Hashem are pure, like silver refined exposed to the earth, purified seven times.’”

Sefer Imrei Noam understands this to be teaching us to avoid pointless conversations and to stay away from gatherings of wicked people and non-Jews, associating with them only when necessary for *parnassah* reasons. However, one should be willing to make himself impure if such associations are needed to do a mitzvah or to help a fellow Jew.

Accordingly, the *pasuk* says that one should not become *tamei* to a “*nefesh* in your nation.” The word “*nefesh*” refers to the power of speech, as

is stated “Bereishis 2:7): “*l’nefesh chaya*”, which Targum Onkelos translates to mean “a spirit of speech”. The word “*b’amav*” (in your nation) refers to degraded people, as the word “*am*” is a reference to the *eirev rov* and wicked men (see Zohar, Chelek 2, 45B). Thus, the *pasuk* is warning us not to make our mouths impure by speaking to such people.

However, it then says that one may make his mouth impure “*l’she’eiro*... for his relative who is close to him.” This is a reference to *parnassah*, as “*she’eir*” is a word used for one’s livelihood (see Kesuvos 47B). Accordingly, the *pasuk* is saying that one may speak to such people for *parnassah* reasons.

Chazal add that the exception to the rule is a case of a “*meis mitzvah*”, when it is permitted to become impure. Thus, we see

that one may make his mouth impure by speaking to *reshaim* if this enables him to do a mitzvah.

The Medrash cites the verse that says that words for Hashem are pure to tell us that if the words one says are for the sake of Heaven – for the sake of a mitzvah – then they remain pure and will not harm a person. So too, if the words are “like silver refined”, meaning that they are for the sake of *parnassah*, they will also remain pure.

Using Negative Language Only When Necessary:

On the topic of guarding one’s words, Chazal say (Vayikroh Rabbah 26:1) that Hashem added eight letters to the Torah, rather than saying a foul word. For this reason, in the story of Noach and the *teiva*, the *pasuk* says (Bereishis 7:8): “From the animal that is *tahor* and from the

animal that is not *tahor*”, rather than saying “from the animal that is *tamei*.” In another place, the Torah adds 23 letters, rather than saying a foul word, when it says “from all the animals that are not *tahor*...”, rather than saying “from the animals that are *tamei*.”

The obvious question is that the Torah does use the word “*tamei*” many times. Why does it only avoid using that word these two times?

The Dubno Magid *zt”l* explains with a *moshol* of an unlearned, wealthy man, who loved enjoying the pleasures of this world. The people of his town gave him the nickname “Zanvil the Glutton” for his gluttonous ways.

One day, a man came to the Rov’s home and asked where R’ Zanvil lives. The *shamash* replied, “Do you mean Zanvil

the Glutton? He lives across the street.”

The Rov heard this and got very upset at the *shamash* for speaking so derogatorily about another Jew.

A few days later, a *shadchan* knocked on the Rov’s door and told him, “R’ Zanzvil sent me to speak to you. He asked me to try to arrange a match between his son and your daughter.”

The Rov got angry at the *shadchan* and yelled, “How could you suggest such a *shidduch* for my daughter? You want me to do a *shidduch* with Zanzvil the Glutton?”

After the *shadchan* left, the *shamash* asked the Rov, “When I called him that name, you got mad at me. But now you used the same name for him?”

The Rov answered, “When someone asks for directions to

his house, it is certainly inappropriate to refer to him in a negative way. But when the *shadchan* suggested a *shidduch* for my daughter with his son, I had to explain why I was opposed to the idea. Therefore, I used the derogative name so that he should understand why I wouldn’t do a *shidduch* with him.”

The *nimshol* is that when the Torah speaks about which animals Noach took on the *teiva*, it was not relevant to call some of them *tamei*. Therefore, the Torah would not use that negative term. But when the Torah describes which animals one must stay away from or which entities are impure and must be avoided, it is necessary to use the word “*tamei*” so that everyone will understand why these things must be avoided.

The Power of a Tzadik's Words:

In general, words have great power. Therefore, **one should always try to avoid any and all frivolous words and attempt to only speak about matters pertaining to Torah and mitzvos.** In particular, the words of *tzadik* are especially powerful and can accomplish a tremendous amount.

It is related that Rav Hirsch, the Magid of Voidaslov *zy"á* (the father of Rav Bunim of Peshischa *zy"á*) once was in Lublin. He needed to send some money to his family in Voidaslov, so he entered the Chozeh's of Lublin's *bais medrash* and asked the men there, "Who is traveling to Voidaslov?"

One of those present at the time was Rav Dovid of Lelov *zy"á*. He told Rav Hirsch, "I am going back to Lelov. On the way,

I can stop in Voidaslov."

The Magid gave him the money and asked him to drop it off by his house. When Rav Dovid got there, he knocked on the door and handed over the money. On his way out, he blessed the family by saying, "*Zei gezunt.* (Be healthy.)"

A while later, the Magid returned home to Voidaslov. He arrived very late at night, after his entire family had gone to sleep. The door was locked and they did not hear him knocking. However, he had one daughter who was crippled and could not walk, who slept closest to the door. Eventually, she heard the knocking, stood on her feet and walked over to open the door.

When the Magid saw his daughter walking, he couldn't believe it. He asked her, "When did this miracle occur? How are you able to walk?"

She told him that when Rav Dovid brought them money, he blessed them to be healthy. Since then, she had been able to walk.

Transforming Klala to Bracha:

The words of simple people, spoken with *temimus* and with good intentions, are also very powerful. **In Shomayim, these words are given great value.**

Sefer Od Yosef Chai (Parshas Matos) relates the story of a simple man who was so unlearned that he didn't even know how to daven and couldn't understand the meaning of basic words in *lashon hakadosh*. When he went to shul, he wouldn't open a *siddur*, as he did not know how to read.

Hashem blessed this man with more than ten sons, and he wanted to bless them every

Shabbos. However, since he didn't know any *pesukim*, he wasn't sure what words to use to bless them.

In the shul the man attended, there was a man who davened with much enthusiasm. He would recite "Eizehu Mekomian" in a pleasant voice every day. When he got to the words "*eilu v'eilu nisrafin b'bais hadeshen*" (these and these were burned in the house of ashes), he would raise his voice and say the words loudly. This unlearned man thought that if this smart man dwelled on these words, they must be a very good *bracha*. He learned how to say these words and, from then on, he would bless his sons with these five words every Shabbos.

One week, a guest was saying in the ignorant man's house. This guest was a *talmid chochom* and he was shocked to hear his host blessing his children with

the words “*eilu v’eilu nisrafin b’bais hadeshen.*” He screamed at him, “What are you doing? You are cursing your sons and saying that they should be burned!”

That night, it was revealed to the *talmid chochom* in a dream that he had done a bad thing. It was explained to him that since the man had no idea what he was saying, Hashem took his words and rearranged the letters so that they would be great blessings.

Regarding this, the *pasuk* states (Shir Hashrim 2:4): “He skips (*diglo*) upon me with love.” This can be understood to mean that Hashem skips and rearranges letters to change their meaning from curses to blessings if the words are said with love and *temimus*.

The Imrei Noam further explains the Medrash that says: “Say to the kohanim, the sons of Aharon, and say to them.’ This is as is stated (Tehillim 12:7): ‘The words of Hashem are pure, like silver refined exposed to the earth, purified seven times’ by citing a Gemara in Bava Basra (8A).

The Gemara relates that during a famine, Rebbi opened the doors to his storage houses and said that those who learned Mishnah, Gemara, halacha or Aggadah may enter and take what they need but those who were unlearned may not. Rav Yonason ben Amram pushed his way in and asked Rebbi for sustenance. Rebbi asked him, “Have you learned any Mikrah or Mishnah?”

Rav Yonason told him, “(Still and all) sustain me like you would a dog or a raven.”

Guarding One's Speech Creates Blessing:

We see from this that *parnassah* can be provided to people even if they do not have Torah and mitzvos. They can be sustained just like animals are, as is stated (Tehillim 36:7): “Man and animals are saved by Hashem.” At the very least, man is no worse than animals.

Although man is a *baal taivoh* and pursues his desires – such as food, drink, sleep, etc. – animals are the same and they still are provided with sustenance. Thus, man can claim that he too deserves to be provided with his needs.

However, **if a person speaks lashon hara, profanity or any other misuse of his mouth, he cannot claim that this is merely his animalistic nature, as speech is something given only to humans** (see Eruchin 15B). If one misuses his mouth in this way, he is, in fact, worse than an animal, which does not have the

power of speech, and he is not deserving of sustenance.

This is hinted to in the verse that says that Hashem’s words are pure. Hashem only desires pure words, and only one who uses his words properly is worthy of “refined silver”, i.e., *parnassah*.

This is as Chazal say (Vayikroh Rabbah 33:1): “If he is good, nothing is better than him. If he is bad, nothing is worth than him.” **If a person makes improper use of his mouth, he is the worst creature in the world. But if one properly uses his words, nothing is better than him.**

As stated above, one’s words are called his “*nefesh*”. Thus, the *pasuk* says that we are commanded not to become impure to a “*nefesh*”, meaning that our words must be kept pure. If we do this, we will be

granted “*she’eiro*”, which we previously explained is a reference to *parnassah*.

The Reward for Watching One’s Words:

Two animals received reward for the way they acted in Egypt: the frogs and the dogs. The frogs were rewarded for risking their lives by jumping into the ovens and furnaces (Pesachim 53B). Their reward was that the fire did not kill them. The dogs were rewarded for remaining silent

when the Jews passed by. Their reward was that they are given our treif meat, and they retain this reward until today.

Rav Dovid of Tolna *zy”a* famously asks why the dogs got a much bigger reward than the frogs. The frogs risked their lives but only received a one-time reward, whereas the dogs merely remained quiet for a short while, and their reward is eternal. He answers that we see from here that **it is easier to jump into a fire than to keep one’s mouth shut.**

Lag B’Omer

A Day Like Yom Kippur:

Rav Yankele of Pshevorsk *zy”a* related that the Sar Shalom of Belz *zy”a* once was speaking about the sanctity of Lag B’Omer, when his son, Rav Zundel, said, “I know.”

His father, turned to him and said, “Nu...” (Prompting him to speak.)

Rav Zundel said, **“It is as great a day as Yom Kippur!”**

The Sar Shalom responded, “That is correct!”

Atonement of Sins:

We may add that Lag B'Omer is comparable to Yom Kippur because sins are forgiven on this day.

Sefer Sifsei Tzadik writes that on Lag B'Omer, Rav Henoch of Alexander *zy"ta* would bless his *chasidim* that their *tefillos* should be accepted in Shomayim. The Sifsei Tzadik adds that perhaps his intentions were that on Motzoei Yom Kippur, it is customary to bless people with those words because it is usually not easy for one's *tefillos* to be accepted since our sins get in the way. On Yom Kippur, however, we atone for our sins, so Motzoei Yom Kippur is a good time for prayers to be accepted. So too, Rav Shimon bar Yochai said that he could exempt the entire world from judgment (Sukkah 45B), which means that **on his Yahrzeit, he helps everyone atone for their sins. Therefore,**

it is a good time for *tefillos* to be accepted.

The Sifsei Tzadik concludes by saying that this explains the minhag to rejoice on this day. The Gemara says (Taanis 26B) that the happiest days of the year were Yom Kippur and Tu B'Av. Yom Kippur was a happy day because our sins are forgiven on this day. Accordingly, **since our sins are forgiven on Lag B'Omer as well, this too is a day of rejoicing.**

Kol Haposhet Yad Nosnim Lo:

The Rebbe of Boyan-Lemberg *zy"ta* said on Lag B'Omer 5695: "Lag B'Omer is similar to Purim in the sense that '*kol haposhet yad nosen lo*' – anyone who sticks out his hand is given what he desires. The main thing is to know how to stretch out your hand."

Like Shevi'I Shel Pesach:

Sefer Ateres Yeshua writes that Lag B'Omer is a time when we can bring *parnassah* to this world, just like on the seventh day of Pesach when Kriyas Yam Suf occurred, which Chazal relate to *parnassah* (Pesachim 118A).

The Beginning of Kabolas Hatorah:

The Bnei Yissochor writes that there is a *minhag* to light candles on this day in honor of the great light that begins to shine on Lag B'Omer, 17 days before Matan Torah.

Like Yom Tov Sheni:

The Bais Avrohom of Slonim *zy"ra* (quoted in M'Zekeinim Esbonen, Chelek 1, page 99) says that Lag B'Omer was given

to the residents of Eretz Yisroel in the place of Yom Tov Sheni of *golus*.

The Sanctity of the Day:

Sefer Hilula D'Rashbi (page 167) states that when Rav Avrohom of Kalisk *zy"ra* would immerse in the mikvah on the morning of Lag B'Omer, he would say, "I accept upon myself the holiness of the day!"

Meriting Yiras Hashem:

The Sefas Emes (Parshas Emor 5652) writes that he heard from his grandfather, the Chidushei Harim *zy"ra*, that on Lag B'Omer, one can merit *yiras Hashem*.

An Auspicious Day For Teshuva:

Sefer Ye'aros Devash (Chelek 2, Drush 11) writes that Lag B'Omer is an auspicious day for *teshuva* because **the zechus of Rav Shimon bar Yochai helps us become pure.** Therefore, one should spend this day doing *teshuva* and not wasting time, as this causes pain to Rav Shimon.

Supernatural Simcha:

The Bnei Yissochor writes that the *simcha* on this day by the Tzion of Rav Shimon bar Yochai is "beyond the natural".

Rav Shimon Rejoices With Those Who Come to Him:

Sefer Masa'os Yerushalaim (page 158) relates the following story, which was said by the Minchas Elazar of Munkatch zy"o, who heard it from the Shinova Rov zy"o, who heard it

from a reliable source from the city of Tzefas:

The author of Sefer Hacharedim served as the *shamash* of the bais medrash in Tzefas during the times of the Bais Yosef, Arizal and Alshich. When he was young, he hid his greatness, conducting himself like a simple Jew.

One year on Lag B'Omer, the Arizal and his students were by the *tzion* of Rav Shimon bar Yochai in Meron, and they were dancing with much *dveikus* and enthusiasm. There also was a very tall old man there, who had a long white beard and was dressed in white clothing. Suddenly, the Arizal grabbed the old man's hands and started dancing with him. They danced together for a long time, and the Arizal then took the hand of the Charedim and brought him into the joyous dance.

Afterwards, the students built up the courage to ask the Arizal why he danced for so long with an old man that none of them knew and with the simple *shamash* of the shul.

The Arizal answered, "If the Tanna Elokoi, Rav Shimon bar Yochai, chose to dance with the shamash, shouldn't I also dance with him?"

They then understood that the tall old man was Rav Shimon himself. He had come to dance and rejoice at his *hilula*. They also now knew that the *shamash* was a holy *tzadik*.

Rejoicing with Fellow Jews:

Rav Yisroel Shimon Kastelanitz *zt"l* (Sefer M'Zekenim Esbonen, Chelek 1, page 100) relates that he once was in Meron, together with the

elderly Slonimer chasid, Rav Mendel Veg *zt"l*, and they danced with much passion. During the dancing, Rav Mendel said to him, "The Kobriner Rebbe said that when Yidden are happy, you should stick your head between them."

The Avodah of the Rebbe of Razvodov:

Rav Moshe of Rozvodov *zy"ra* (son of Rav Eliezer of Dzikov *zy"ra* and son-in-law of the Yitav Lev of Sighet *zy"ra*) would not meet with the public during the year to allow them to ask him to daven and create salvations for them. The one exception was on Lag B'Omer, when he allowed everyone in and blessed everyone. Many people received salvations after receiving his *bracha* on Lag B'Omer.

On this day, he would daven for the *amud* and say Kadish,

and he also would light a candle in honor of the Yahrzeit and give “*tikkun*”. The Tzvi L’Tzadik of Bluzhov *zy”a* would jokingly say, “Rav Shimon passed away 2,000 years ago but he still has a young orphaned son in this world...”

Sefer Hachachmah Me’ayin (page 132) quotes Rav Yitzchok of Stutchin *zy”a*, the son of Rav Moshe of Rozvodov, as saying that his father said on Lag B’Omer, “If I could be in Meron on Lag B’Omer, **I could bring about all kinds of *yeshuos* for Yidden and, perhaps, even the true *yeshua*, the arrival of Moshiach.**”

Moshiach’s Arrival on Lag B’Omer:

One Lag B’Omer, the Tzvi L’Tzadik of Bluzhov *zy”a* was speaking about Moshiach and he said, “I can’t say when he will

come but I can say for sure that he will come on Lag B’Omer.”

Promised to Have Children:

Sefer Siach Zekeinim (Chelek 3, page 79) relates the following:

Rav Yitzchok of Stutchin *zy”a* (the son of Rav Moshe of Rozvodov *zy”a*) lived in the city of Tarnow. One of his *chasidim* who also lived in that city did not have any children and he would often ask his Rebbe to give him a *bracha* but Rav Yitzchok demurred. This left the man feeling lost, with no idea what else he could do.

One year, when the *chasidim* were waiting for the Rebbe to start his *tish* on Lag B’Omer, this *chasid* decided that he wouldn’t allow the Rebbe to leave his room until he guaranteed him a child. He stood

outside the door, holding it shut, so that the Rebbe would not be able to get out.

When the Rebbe wanted to leave the room, he was unable to open the door. He realized that someone was holding it closed, so he called out, "Who's there?"

The *chasid* answered, "It's me. I want a *bracha* to have a son."

The Rebbe angrily said, "Let me out!"

The *chasid* replied, "I won't let the Rebbe out until he blesses me with a son."

Finally, the Rebbe promised that he would give his blessing and the *chasid* let him out.

At the *tish*, the Rebbe "explained himself to Hashem" and said, "What could I do? Could I give up the Lag B'Omer *tish*? I had no choice."

And the *chasid* had a child

within the year.

Learning From Rav Shimon:

Sefer Botzina D'Nehora relates that the Rebbe of Lechovitch *zy"ra* and Rav Aharon of Stolin *zy"ra* traveled to Rav Boruch of Mezhibozh *zy"ra* for Lag B'Omer seven times. On this day, Rav Boruch's *tish* went on for a very long time.

One year, in the middle of the *tish*, Rav Boruch got very emotional. He stood up and said, "*Boruch haba Rav Shimon.*"

This led everyone to be overcome with fear.

Another year on Lag B'Omer, Rav Boruch grasped a copy of the Zohar Hakadosh and recited the *pasuk* (Yeshaya 63:16): "For You are our father, for Avrohom did not know us, neither did Yisroel recognize us." He then

said, “Rav Shimon, from you we know how to recognize Hashem.”

Learning the Zohar Like Rav Shimon Intended:

Sefer Yifrach B’Yamav Tzadik (page 22) relates that someone once told the Sanzer Rov *zy”a* that Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Zidachov *zy”a* once broke the ice of a river and went into the frigid water to be *toivel*, and he learned Zohar Hakadosh all night while immersed in the freezing water. The Rov responded, “I also could break ice and sit in freezing water. But to learn Zohar with the *kavanos* that Rav Shimon intended is something only the Zidichover Rebbe could do.”

Rav Shimon is for Everyone:

The Karliner Rebbe *zy”a* would say, “Just like Hashem is there for everyone, Rashbi is there for everyone, even for lowly people.”

One year on Lag B’Omer, his grandson, the Stoliner Rebbe was asked to explain this statement. He said, “Why are you asking me about this statement? No one comprehends more than half of what is written in Sefer Bais Aharon. But perhaps we can say that this means that every *tzadik* is revealed to a person on the level that person is holding. However, this does not apply to Rav Shimon. He is revealed equally to everyone. Even lowly people can see his full holiness.”

On another occasion, he told a *chasid* who asked him the same question, “I can’t explain to you who Rav Shimon was. But I can say that he was a Rebbe with *chasidim*. Some Rebbes only

allow in those who wear a *shtreimel* and some only allow in those who wear a long *kapota* and have a beard and *gartel*. Rav Shimon, however, is a Rebbe for everyone – for *chasidim* and *misnagdim*, for those who wear

shtreimels and those who don't, for those who have *gartels* and those who don't, for those who have beards and those who don't. Just like Hashem is everyone's G-d, Rav Shimon is everyone's Rebbe."

20 Iyar 5596- Yahrzeit of Rav Mordechai ben Rav Menachem Nochum of Chernobyl Zy"a

A Lofty Neshama:

Amazing stories are related about the birth of this *tzadik*. It is said that his father, the Meor Einayim zy"a, once was with a group of *talmidim* sitting before the Magid of Mezheritzh zy"a. The Magid said to them, "You should know that a very lofty *neshama*, the likes of which hasn't been in this world in hundreds of years, is going to come down to the world. Therefore, you should all go home, as it might be born to one of you." They all obeyed the Magid and traveled home.

On his way home, the Meor Einayim decided to travel through the town of Koritz to speak to Rav Pinchos of Koritz zy"a and ask him to daven for him to bear this holy *neshama*. When he told Rav Pinchos why he came, Rav Pinchos told him to come with him to the mikvah. When they got to the mikvah, Rav Pinchos immersed one time and then said, "I have already succeeded in granting your request. This holy soul will be born to you!"

The Meor Einayim told him, "I want generations upon

generations of *tzadikim* to descend from this *neshama* until Moshiach's arrival."

Rav Pinchos immersed a second time and then said, "I have successfully fulfilled this request as well."

The Meor Einayim then said, "I want them not to need to be supported by anyone."

Rav Pinchos thought for a moment and said, "That is something I cannot do. The world will need them and they will need the world."

The Meor Einayim then continued on his way home.

After he left, the Baal Hatanya arrived in Koritz to ask for the same thing. Rav Pinchos told him, "You're too late. Your friend, Rav Nochum of Chernobyl, got here before you."

A year later, Rav Mordechai of Chernobyl *zy"ra* was born.

The Neshama Blocked Them on the Way:

His son, Rav Avrohom of Trisk *zy"ra*, related as follows:

When I was a three-year-old child, I once traveled with my father to get some fresh air. On the way, the horses stopped and refused to go any further. We sat there for a full hour and I realized that the horses must have stopped for a reason. I asked my father, "Why are the horses sitting here for so long?"

He didn't reply and we stood there for another half hour. Suddenly, I heard a voice saying, "I gave you money, why don't you help me?"

My father then took a ruble out of his pocket and threw it on the ground and said, "Take your ruble back. After I accepted your *pidyon*, you did a number of major *aveiros*."

Afterwards, he explained to me that a man once came to him and give him a *kvittel* with a *pidyon* of one ruble. This man was a sinner, who did many sins even after he gave the *pidyon*. Now, the man had come from the World of Truth, where he had no *menucha*, and was stopping them from moving. Therefore, he threw the ruble on the ground to return it to him, which allowed the horses to continue.

Salvation in the Merit of Helping a Couple Get Married:

Rav Mordechai had a *chasid* named R' Moshe Leib who was a *talmid chochom* and honorable man. Although he was far from wealthy, he was always happy. He never asked the Rebbe to bless him with *gashmius*. Rather, he only asked for *brachos* that related to *ruchnius* and *avodas*

Hashem.

The years passed and his children reached marriageable age but R' Moshe Leib had no money for wedding expenses. His wife asked him to request a *bracha* from the Rebbe but he didn't want to bother the Magid with such trivial matters.

The next time he went to see the Rebbe, he spoke to him about lofty topics, as he always did. As they were talking, R' Moshe Leib recalled his difficult situation and, without even realizing it, he let out a sigh. The Rebbe looked at him in puzzlement and asked, "Why are you sighing? What happened?"

R' Moshe Leib tried to dismiss the Rebbe's concerns and said it was nothing but the Magid understood the truth. He said, "Moshe Leib, I know you well. You wouldn't sigh for no reason. Tell me what is troubling you."

Left with no other choice, R' Moshe Leib told the Rebbe about his problems. When the Rebbe heard how bad things were, he said, "You don't have to sigh about this. Go home and start looking for a groom for your oldest daughter. After you sign the *Tennaim*, come back to me and I'll tell you what to do."

The Rebbe's words were a great comfort to R' Moshe Leib. He went home to his city of Kiev in a very good mood and then went to a famous yeshiva to find a *chosson* for his daughter, promising a generous dowry of 300 gold coins. A match was made and the *Tennaim* were signed. R' Moshe Leib then returned to the Magid and told him the good news that his daughter was engaged and he had obligated himself to pay a *nadan* of 300 gold coins, and he also needed another 100 for the cost of the wedding.

The Rebbe told him, "Go back to Kiev. There, you will meet a wealthy man named R' Chaim Breiner. He will give you all the money you need."

R' Moshe Leib went back home and asked where R' Chaim Breiner lived. He went to his house and knocked on the door, and as soon as the wealthy man saw him, his face turned white. He was so shocked that he couldn't utter a word. When he calmed down, he asked, "Who are you? Why are you here?"

R' Moshe Leib stood there in confusion and asked, "Why did my appearance shock you so much? I'm just a simple man named Moshe Leib and my Rebbe sent me to you because I need money to marry off my daughter."

The wealthy man immediately went to his safe and took out the entire amount R' Moshe Leib

needed. He then said, “Here is your money. Hashem should give you *nachas* from your daughter and, in this *zechus*, I should also have a salvation.”

R’ Moshe Leib thanked him but also asked him to please explain himself. R’ Chaim said, “I don’t know you or your Rebbe. Hashem blessed me with wealth and I have never lacked for anything. My only problem is that my only son causes me a lot of trouble. When he was a child, I saw that he had a brilliant mind and was sure he would become a huge *talmid chochom*. He excelled in his studies and everyone had high hopes for him. At his bar mitzvah, he delivered a wonderful *drasha*, impressing everyone who was there. When he was 18, he was already a great Torah scholar. However, when he turned 19 last year, something happened to him. He seems to have lost his

mind. I have taken him to the best doctors and consulted with great Rabbanim, but no one has been able to help me.

“One night, I dreamt that I was in a certain city. In my dream, I entered the local bais medrash for Shacharis and I saw that a large crowd had gathered to hear a *drasha*. I made my way close to the *bima* and saw a man with a shining countenance. His face was shining so brightly that I could not look directly at him. I asked the man standing next to me who this was and he said that it was a famous Rebbe who holds much sway in Shomayim and who is able to bring about great *yeshuos*.

“I decided that I should ask him for a *bracha* that my son should be healed. I waited until I had the chance to approach him and told him about my problem. He said to me, ‘There is a Jew here who is a *yarei shomayim*

and a *talmid chochom*. He has to marry off his daughter but he has no money. If you commit to give him the money for her dowry and wedding expenses, you will merit your salvation.’

“I asked him, ‘How will I know who to give the money to?’

“He answered by pointing one man out to me and saying, ‘Remember that man’s face. He will soon come to your house.’

“When I woke up, I remembered the face the Rebbe had pointed out to me. That is why I got so shaken up when I saw you. I recognized you as the man from my dream.”

R’ Moshe Leib advised R’ Chaim to come with him to meet the Rebbe, and he agreed. They set off the next morning and when they entered the Rebbe’s room, R’ Chaim recognized him right away as the *tzadik* from his dream. The Magid said to him, “In the merit of the mitzvah you did, your son will be cured. Go home now and you will see that his mind has returned to him.”

And so it was. The wealthy man went home and his son came out to greet him, speaking clearly and lucidly, as if he never had been sick.

The Rambam Writes About Those Who
Bring Joy to Widdows and Orphans

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Joy to These Unfortunate
Souls Is Comparable to
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